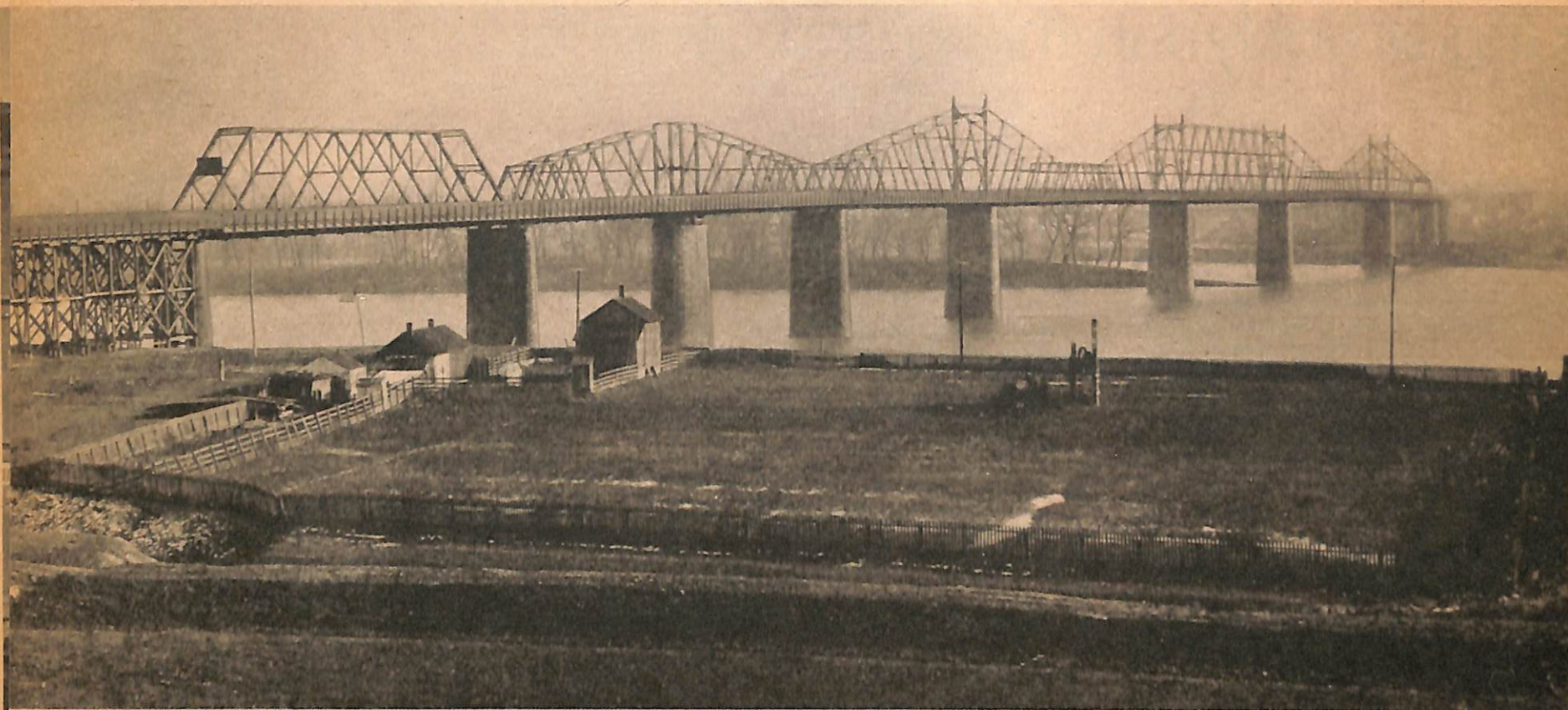




LINKED BY STEEL Louisville was drawn closer to Indiana when the K. & I. Bridge over the river was finished in 1912.

Then came the merger of all electric firms



AUTOMOBILES became more and more common. This was an early repair garage.

—large and small—to provide for their own particular lighting needs.

While this development was underway, rate charges had shown a decrease. But charges still were high—the base rate was 14 cents per kilowatt hour as late as 1906, in fact. Today it is 2.317 cents per kilowatt hour for residential users.

The answer to high rates obviously was a consolidation of all or several plants into larger, more efficient central plants that could make and distribute electricity cheaper.

The consolidation actually started in 1890 when the Louisville Gas Company, which had foreseen that electricity was the coming illuminant, absorbed the Louisville Electric Light Company and a new station, a model for its day, was started at 14th and Magazine Streets.

Then, in 1892, the Louisville Gas Company acquired the property of the Brush Electric Light Company, the firm which had been the first in the city to produce electricity specifically for lighting.

The following year, the company, now solidly positioned in the electric field, installed four "10,000 light dynamos," the largest units of the type in the country.

The next merger of consequence by the Louisville Gas Company came in 1903 when the property of the Citizens Light and Power Company was acquired, and service was extended to hundreds of customers who previously

had not been served. Five years later the expanded company constructed the building on Chestnut near 3d Street which still serves as its main offices.

Meanwhile, consolidation had taken place among other companies producing electricity in the city. As a matter of fact, in 1903 the Louisville Lighting Company was incorporated as the merger of seven different firms, the oldest of which, Gooch Electric Light Company, had been formed in 1890.

Efforts to consolidate other companies failed until the firm of H. M. Byllesby presented a plan which included all electric and gas companies doing business in the city. Negotiations drug out for months, but finally the merger of the Louisville Gas Company, Louisville Lighting Company and Kentucky Heating Company, the three largest concerns in the field, was consummated formally on July 2, 1913, and the Louisville Gas and Electric Company came into being.

The next day two other properties, George G. Fetter Light and Heat Company and Campbell Electric Company, were acquired, and on July 10, the Kentucky Electric Company sold its property to the new firm.

The result of these various mergers, as time would prove, was the formation of one company capable of providing the adequate, progressively cheaper power needed by Louisville in facing the grave challenge of the years that lay ahead.